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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/303,632

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CHERYL B. LEBEAU

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07/08/2009

ARTHUR G. YEAGER, Esq.
1301 Riverplace Boulevard
Suite 1916
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32207

EXAMINER

EVANISKO, LESLIE J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2854

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/303,632	Applicant(s) LEBEAU ET AL.	
	Examiner Leslie J. Evanisko	Art Unit 2854	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 March 2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 21,25-32,37,38,41 and 42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 27,30,31 and 38 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 21,25,26,28,29,32,37,41 and 42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 20 December 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 27, 30, 31, and 38 have been withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on May 24, 2007.

It is noted that applicant's amendment dated March 11, 2009 fails to indicate with the appropriate status identifiers that these claims have been withdrawn from consideration. It is requested that applicant use accurate status identifiers for the claims in any future amendments. Particular attention is invited to 37 CFR 1.121.

Drawings

2. The replacement sheets of drawings were received on December 20, 2006. These drawings have been approved by the Examiner.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 21, 25-26, and 28-29 are objected to because of the following informalities:

With respect to claim 21, it is suggested that the phrase --and a bottom surface-- be inserted after "surface" in line 5 and then the phrase "said sheet being configured to contact and entirely protect both the upper surface and a bottom surface of the

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keyboard" in lines 8-9 be deleted and replaced with --and--. This suggestion is made to use less awkward claim language since the claim as presently written includes a double recitation regarding the upper surface of the keyboard being contacted and protected by the cover (in line 5 and again in lines 8-9)

Appropriate correction and/or clarification is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 21, 25, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Paxton (US 3,446,344).

With respect to claim 21, Paxton teaches a package 10 of individual disposable transparent bags or “covers,” 11 each cover consisting of a flat and entirely transparent planar sheet of pliable plastic film of uniform thickness throughout and a predetermined size in length and width. See, Figures 1 and 3 and column 3, lines 11-20 in particular.

Note that although Paxton does not necessarily teach the cover is used for covering a keyboard, note that the claim is drawn to the cover structure per se and not the combination of the cover and keyboard. Therefore, the claim language regarding how the cover is used is merely the intended use of the cover and has no patentable

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significance to the claims. Thus, Paxton teach a “cover” including all of the structure as recited.

Furthermore, it is noted that the majority of the claim language in claim 21 (such as the language regarding the cover being capable of inhibiting unintentional contact, not impeding the operator’s ability to manipulate the keyboard, the cover configured to contact and entirely protect the keyboard surfaces, and the cover maintaining the keyboard sterile and uncontaminated) are merely functional recitations of desired modes of operation. Since Paxton teaches a “cover” having all of the structural elements as recited, it is capable of providing those functions and meets the claim language as recited.

With respect to claim 25-26, note that Paxton teaches a sheet including an upper member and lower member formed as an envelope with only one elongated opening along a top edge portion so as to be capable of contacting and protecting the entire upper surface and lower surface of a keyboard as broadly recited.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the

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various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 28 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Paxton.

With respect to claims 28 and 29, note that Paxton teaches the sheet is comprised of two identical flat “members” that are broadly “fastened together” along the two short side edge portions so as to be closed and along the elongated bottom edge portion with an opening formed along the elongated top edge portion that is capable of permit a keyboard to be inserted therein as recited. Although Paxton teaches the cover is formed from a tubular member that is heat sealed along one edge instead of having two separate sheets heat sealed along three edges, it is the Examiner’s position that the structure of Paxton reads on the claim language as recited since the end result is a cover comprised of two identical flat sheet members broadly “fastened together” along three edges so as to form an envelope to hold an object. However, in any event, even if one could argue the tubular structure of Paxton doesn't meet the claim limitations as recited, it is the Examiner’s position that forming a bag-like structure by providing two identical sheets heat sealed along three edges is well known in the art, as exemplified, for example, by a

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typical two ply bag. Therefore, Paxton teaches or at least renders obvious the cover as recited.

9. Claims 32, 37, 41 and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yanagisawa (US 5,872,527) in view of Paxton (US 3,445,344).

With respect to claim 32, Yanagisawa teaches a keyboard and an individual disposable transparent cover 34, 34' for protecting the sterility of and preventing contaminations between dental or medical patients, the cover comprising a flat and entirely transparent planar sheet of pliable film of uniform thickness and a predetermined size in length and width for forming an envelope or enclosure (column 11, lines 36-37) for enclosing the entire upper and lower surfaces of the keyboard as recited. See Figures 9-10 and column 11, lines 21-67 in particular. Note that the disposable cover of Yanagisawa is broadly capable of being disposed of after each patient as recited. Additionally, the keyboard of Yanagisawa is rectangular as shown in Figure 6 and therefore, it would appear that the sheet for enclosing the entire keyboard would also be rectangular with long top and bottom edges and short side edges forming an envelope as recited. Although Yanagisawa is silent with respect to the particular details of the enclosure configuration, note Paxton teaches an individual transparent "cover" 11 consisting of a flat and entirely transparent planar sheet of pliable plastic film of uniform thickness throughout and having a predetermined size in length and width, the sheet being rectangular and having a long top edge portion, a long bottom edge portion, and two short side edge portions, the sheet being formed as an envelope into which an object may be placed to cover and protect the object while allowing a user to clearly view

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the object. Note the previous comments with respect to claims 21, 25 and 26 above. In view of this teaching, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the “cover” of Paxton as the enclosure for the keyboard of Yanagisawa to provide a simple and easily replaceable cover for better protection of the keyboard.

With respect to claim 37, note Yanagisawa as modified by Paxton teach the keyboard and cover as recited with the possible exception of the envelope having an elongated opening along the long top edge portion with the bottom edge and side edges being closed. However, the selection of particular side of the enclosure in which the opening is formed for insertion of object such as a keyboard appears to involve simply a matter of design choice. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the cover member of Paxton to be sized and configured as an envelope with an elongated opening along any desired edge, such as a top edge portion, while the other edges are closed to provide a flexible transparent cover for use in a sterile environment with an opening for allowing insertion of the keyboard inside the enclosure.

With respect to claims 41 and 42, note Yanagisawa as modified by Paxton teaches a keyboard and a disposable transparent cover including sheet members of pliable plastic film of uniform thickness throughout and a predetermined size in length and width. Note the previous comments with respect to claims 32 and 37 in particular. Although Paxton teaches the cover is formed from a tubular member that is heat sealed along one edge instead of having two individual and separate sheets heat sealed along three edges, it is the Examiner’s position that the structure of Paxton reads on the claim language as recited since the end result is a cover comprised of two identical flat sheets

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broadly “fastened together” along three edges so as to form an envelope to hold an object. However, in any event, even if one could argue the tubular structure of Paxton doesn't meet the claim limitations as recited, it is the Examiner's position that forming a bag-like structure by providing two identical sheets heat sealed along three edges is well known in the art, as exemplified, for example, by a typical two ply bag. Therefore, Paxton teaches or at least renders obvious the cover as recited.

Response to Arguments

11. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 21, 25-26, 28-29, 32, 37, 41 and 42 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

12. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the

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advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Leslie J. Evanisko** whose telephone number is **(571) 272-2161**. The examiner can normally be reached on T-F 8:00 am-6:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Judy Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-2258. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Leslie J. Evanisko /
Leslie J. Evanisko
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2854

lje
July 6, 2009